GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3176
ANSWERED ON:10.12.2001
PEPPER FARMERS
P.C. THOMAS

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the total production of pepper in each state during the last three years, year-wise and state-wise;

(b) the price of pepper during the said period;

(c) whether the price of pepper has fallen during the current year;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government to protect the farmers therefrom;

(e) the details of pepper imported and exported during the above period;

(f) whether there is great demand of pepper abroad;
(g) if so, whether the export of pepper has declined during the above; and
(h) if not, the reasons therefor and the steps taken/being taken in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV)

(a): The latest statistics of production of black pepper are available for 1997-98, 1998-99 and 1999-2000. The State-wise statistics of production for these three years are as under:

(in Thousand Tonnes)

State	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Karnataka	0.92	1.03	1.65
Kerala	55.52	64.34	56.43
Tamil Nadu	0.80	0.90	0.12
A&N Islands	0.08	0.08	0.08
Pondicherry	0.01	0.01	0.01
All - India	57.33	66.36	58.29

(b)to(h): The exports, imports and the Wholesale Price Indices (WPI) of black pepper(base year 1993-94 = 100) during 1997-98 to 2000-01 are given below:

(Exports/Imports in Tonnes)

Year	Exports	Imports	WPI
1997-98	31349	1694	421.1
1998-99	29943	2216	511.2
1999-2000	31978	2097	525.9
2000-2001	17134	2643	501.4

According to the average WPI of 5 months from April 2001 to August 2001, the WPI has declined to 303.2. The fall in prices of pepper is mainly due to increase in supply position in the international markets and the main buying countries have reduced their inventory level.

Government have not officially made any assessment of demand of pepper abroad. However, there was a decline in exports during 2000-01 compared to previous three years.

Government have taken the following steps to improve exports:

? Support exporters, traders, processors and growers to improve quality of pepper through post harvest training, setting up of processing units and improving infrastructure including in-house laboratories for quality checks.

? Awarding spice house certificate and Indian spices LOGO for consistent improvement in quality.

? Assist exporters in brand promotion.

? Participate in international fairs and seminars to promote Indian pepper.

? The futures trading of pepper, conducted by Indian Pepper and Spice Trade Association (IPSTA) at Cochin, gives opportunities for growers and traders to participate in futures trade for better prices. Government of India have also decided to conduct futures trading of pepper in dollar terms.

? Popularising organic farming of pepper which fetches a premium price in the international market.